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probable. And his successors continued his work, substituting for conventional themes the products of observation, making stories of love and adventure real with scenes drawn from actual existence. But through all changes of thought and content the same form persisted, and the principles of literary style, which *Thèbes*, *Piramus*, *Énéas* and *Troie* first formulated, remained constant with the romantic poets of France.

Faral's command of detail is unusual—we have done scant justice to his erudition—his enthusiasm is contagious. His argument in behalf of the independent origin of the romances of antiquity is the reasonable one. No models for them are in existence. Why then should we suppose such models?

The answer would be, without much doubt, that it is difficult to believe in the existence of a clerk who could have constructed and versified, at one and the same time, such a poem as *Thèbes*. Had that clerk lived his talent would have entitled him to recognition. His name, at least, would have been preserved. On the contrary, we might readily admit that a poet well up in medieval lyric, one who knew Ceramon, for instance, could have fashioned *Piramus et Tisbé* out of a glossed text of Ovid. But the comparatively simple solution of this case would not apply to works of the complexity of *Thèbes* and *Énéas*, a complexity which Faral's own investigations have increased rather than lessened. As for Benoît, few would concede to him the capacity for independent creation. What inventive powers could be claimed by an author who makes the stupid blunders which Faral himself stresses in the incident of the embalming of Hector, or who in his blind adherence to contradictory records makes two of his leading characters die two different deaths each? Besides, in the case of *Troie*, the subject seems to have passed the boundaries of the schools, as Orderic Vital, writing in an abbey of this same Norman land, a quarter of a century before Benoît, testifies.²⁷

Nor are *Thèbes* and *Énéas*, confessedly the products of a much higher order of mind than Benoît's, above legitimate criticism from the standpoint of construction. If at times they repeat the exact order and the very phrases of Statius and Virgil, at other times, less frequent indeed, they depart from them most irrationally. Why such senseless variations in minor

details if they were following the actual text of these masterpieces? The question cannot as yet be answered in a way to satisfy every one. But when it is answered, its solution will be mainly due to the scholar whose learning and untiring industry have already reached such substantial results in this most interesting and suggestive volume.

F. M. WARREN.

Yale University.

LYRIC POETRY

English Lyrical Poetry from its Origins to the present time, by EDWARD BLISS REED. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1912.

The English Lyric, by FELIX E. SCHELLING. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1913.

Lyric Poetry, by ERNEST RHYS. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1913.

Of all categories of literature lyric poetry is the most difficult to define sharply. It is generally a thing apart from other types, but it often merges into other types, and any intense moment may force to the surface the lyrical element in drama or epic. The borderland between the *genres* is hard to trace. It is perhaps for this reason that, with excellent monographs on portions of the subject, there has been till lately no satisfactory survey of the entire field. The adjective, to be sure, begs the question at issue in this notice. In May, 1912, Professor Reed's book appeared, followed in little more than a year by the two other works enumerated above.

The authors of these three studies of the English lyric differ widely in their sense of proportion. To the pre-Elizabethan period Schelling gives about 14% of his space, Reed about 25%, Rhys about 35%—more than a third. To the nineteenth century and after Rhys gives about 22%, Reed about 29%, Schelling just 50%. There can be no question but that Rhys sacrifices the modern period in order to deal more fully with medieval developments, and that Schelling devotes a dispro-

²⁷ A Syrian Sultana is exhorting beleaguered French knights to resistance: "Decennem Troiae obsidionem recolite, et miros heroum eventus, quos histriones vestri quotidie concrepant, recensete." *Historia Ecclesiastica*, XI, 26. Cf. *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XXVIII (November, 1913), pp. 203-205.

portionate amount to the nineteenth century, especially to the treatment of the lyric of our own day. Whether the work of living authors, especially of men so young and as yet so formless as Mr. Noyes, comes properly within the scope of literary history is certainly open to question. All three writers have answered it in the affirmative. It is a pity that none of the three has included within his range the development of the lyric in this country; critics are coming more and more to disregard the political boundary lines that must else divide the two parts of what is really one literature.

With more space at his command, Reed is able to get something of the comparative outlook that is so essential to the proper understanding of literary types. His sketch of the Provençal, French, and Latin lyric, while necessarily brief, is delightfully appreciative, and his study of Petrarch is a needed link (and one almost wholly missing in the other two books) between the Tudor poetry and the Petrarchian school of Italy and France. To the influence of sixteenth-century France he might have with profit devoted more space. Within his small book Schelling could hardly attempt anything like a comparative point of view, though he indicates where such digressions should occur. Judicious omissions in his last chapter would have given him some of the necessary room. Rhys has but casual and disconnected allusions to the poetry of France and Italy and attempts no real comparative study. On the other hand, he enters a field that Reed and Schelling wisely keep out of—the folk-element in early song. Here his remarks are haphazard and unsatisfactory. With regard to the inclusion or omission of individual poets the taste and judgment of the authors are again divergent. Rhys omits many names, “not because they did not write anything of value,” he says (p. 371), “but because they did not considerably affect the growth of the verse.” But such a standard consistently adopted would have worked to the exclusion of various writers who are discussed—Aphra Behn, for example, or Henry More, or Andrew Lang. On the other hand, one may rightly complain of the omission, among others,

of John Webster, T. L. Beddoes, Emily Brontë, James Thompson II, Austin Dobson, and Francis Thompson. In Schelling's book I note but two omissions of consequence. George Darley's name occurs thrice, but there is no specific reference to his delicate lyric talent, especially as seen in *Sylvia*. More remarkable is the lack of any allusion to the poetry of Wilfrid S. Blunt. These omissions are notable only in a work so comprehensive as this, for Schelling's faults are those of commission. Not only are there paragraphs that are little more than catalogues of names, betraying anxiety lest the least poetical minnow escape the critical net, but in several instances a number of writers are tediously grouped together only to be dismissed with the remark that they have no place in the history of the lyric (e. g., p. 32 and p. 147). Why mention them then? Here, as in many things, Reed affords the golden mean. His range does not include as many living writers as does Schelling's; but such omissions are the result, not of neglect, but of suspended judgment and of proper sense of proportion. I am informed that he has in preparation a separate work upon the lyric of to-day.

In modern book-making a good bibliography and a good index have become essentials. In both these respects Schelling is admirable. Reed's triple-entry index is needlessly complex and his bibliography is too sparse to be of much service. Rhys has no bibliography, and indeed but two or three exact references in his whole book. His index is inexact and incomplete. Francis Thompson, for example, is mentioned, but wisely without a page reference, for his name does not occur in the text. Lovelace, on the contrary, whose work is discussed, has no place in the index.

In point of style, Reed is by far the most pleasant and is not devoid of quiet humor. Schelling is, as always, business-like. Rhys is often astonishingly bad. He is fond of ponderous dicta which, on analysis, are found to be of little real substance. Thus, of the *Morte d'Arthur* he writes (p. 73), “There prose was allowed, it seems, to grow lyrical without growing ashamed of itself.” I do not know what this means. Certainly the author's prose should

be ashamed of itself, for, generally clumsy and verbose, it is at times positively ungrammatical. For example: "We part from him and Robert of Brunne, however, with a distinct feeling of something added to his resources of the tongue and the congenial powers of verse" (p. 47). Or: "Enough has been drawn from this early dramatic literature to show that, like in later plays, it abounded in true lyric" (p. 67). Or read the amazing sentence, too long to quote, on p. 119, beginning "To know all."

The two American writers are much more accurate than the Englishman. In this respect Reed is especially notable. The few errors that I have found will be corrected, I am assured, in the revised edition of the book, now in press. Schelling's work is done with painstaking accuracy, but a few points may be noted. Watts-Dunton's phrase "The Renaissance of Wonder" is found, not in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, as is said on p. 150, but in the introductory essay to the third volume of *Chamber's Cyclopædia of English Literature*. On p. 172, line 3, for "Farewell" read "Fare thee well." The revival of the literary drama which Schelling (p. 190) dates from the publication of Shelley's *Cenci* in 1819, should certainly be dated (as Shelley would have acknowledged) from the presentation of Coleridge's *Remorse* at Drury Lane in 1816. *Poems by Two Brothers* was published in 1827, not 1826 (p. 194). The date of the accession of Alfred Austin to the laureateship is given (p. 248) as 1902, of course a misprint for 1892; but that, too, is incorrect as the appointment was not made till 1896. On p. 273 the *Wessex Poems* of Thomas Hardy are called *Essex Poems*—a bad misprint. How in 1894 Browning could have added his "cordial appreciation" to Patmore's praise of Thompson I cannot see (p. 274). Schelling does scant justice to Tennyson's volume of 1832, classing it with *Poems chiefly Lyrical* as not "wholly undeserving of the disapproval" of reviewers. Yet surely this volume is, as Gosse says, a "most astonishing revelation of finished genius," astonishing, too, for the immense progress made since the *Juvenilia* of 1830. In his account of the Oxford Movement (p. 217 f.) Schelling is not only unsym-

pathetic but at times inaccurate. To indicate his lack of comprehension of the spiritual value of the movement would take too much space; I may remark, however, that to say that "the Oxford Movement was dead, in 1845, with Newman's admission into the communion of Rome" (p. 218) is to invite contradiction from anyone familiar with a powerful section of Anglican thought to-day. See the article on "The Future of the Oxford Movement" by E. G. Selwyn, in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, March, 1912, vol. 71, p. 522 f. Nor is Schelling's treatment of the Pre-Raphaelites satisfactory. His statement of their principles is vague and ambiguous. It may be remarked, too, that he speaks of the "spontaneity" with which Rossetti's poems were written (p. 231). This directly contradicts the poet's own account of the travail with which he composed. See A. C. Benson's *Rossetti*, p. 74.

Rhys has done much less accurate work than Schelling; and his book is further disfigured by at least fifty misprints, the more important of which shall be noted. On p. 16 it is said that "there is no true rhyme" in Anglo-Saxon verse, a misstatement which the author himself corrects on p. 19. He accepts without question Professor Manly's theory of the dual or multiple authorship of *Piers the Plowman*. As this is by no means established, it would have been well to give some indication of the controversy. On p. 119 he speaks of Anne Boleyn as "a princess destined to be a queen." He gives no indication that the sincerity of Sidney's love for Penelope Devereux has ever been so much as questioned (p. 149). Reed and Schelling agree with him in accepting the autobiographical interpretation of *Astrophel and Stella*. Schelling (p. 59) refers to Sir Sidney Lee's opposing view. But Lee's opinion loses weight because its advocate is committed to a conventional, non-literal interpretation of the Elizabethan sonnet-sequences in general. Of more force and of interest as prior to Lee is the discussion by Courthope (II, 226), who rejects, on what seem to me solid grounds, the autobiographical view. To this no reference is made in any of these books.

To continue the summary of Rhys's errors.

On p. 220 he says that Vaughan chose "a very bad model in *Marino*," as though Marino were a poem. This may be a printer's error. It is hard to put upon any poor devil of a printer the really atrocious misprint, occurring twice on p. 228, of "Sampson" for "Samson." On p. 256 it should have been noted that Thomson's claim to the authorship of "Rule, Britannia" has been vindicated. To put Macpherson, whose *Fingal* was published in 1763, "at the end of the century" (p. 270) amounts to a gross anachronism, since "Ossian" is to be associated with Walpole and other heralds of Romanticism. I do not understand why it seems to Rhys (p. 299) "almost an impiety" to associate with Landor Southey, whom Landor himself described as

no less firm or ready than the guide
Of Alighieri, trustier far than he.

The date of Tennyson's second independent volume is 1832, not 1833 (p. 326), despite the title-page. The difference of a year is here important. I see no reason for Rhys's approval (p. 328) of Coleridge's statement that Tennyson began "to write verses without very well understanding what metre is" (*Table-Talk*, April 24, 1833). Tennyson tried to account for this strange criticism (see the *Memoir* I, 50, note). The truth is that Coleridge was simply wrong. I have been through both rare little volumes without finding a line that will not scan. In discussing Browning's metrical defects Rhys advances the ingenious theory (p. 336) that, on account of Browning's "extremely neat manuscript, he was misled by the symmetry of the lines as written into believing they had organic symmetry." Then, after a discussion of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, comes this sentence, "It is curious to remember, in view of Browning's profound admiration for these sonnets, . . . his undisguised contempt for the form in general as a vehicle of poetic ideas—

'Did Shakespeare write sonnets?
The worse Shakespeare he.'

Such a garbled misquotation and misinterpretation is really disgraceful.

Of the printer's many errors the following are the more serious. The lines at the bottom of p. 22 are badly punctuated. On p. 23, line 10, Caedmon has no accent; two lines below it has. On p. 109, line 9 from bottom, is the bad error of "Dowe" for "Dowel," and there is a superfluous capital in "Dobest." By putting "Chronicle" in italics on p. 112, line 4, the printer has made nonsense. On p. 127, last line but one of verse, for "but" read "by." On p. 128, line 22, for "sometimes" read "sometime." The loss of the word "the" in the last line of the quotation on p. 139 spoils the metre. The apostrophe in line 7 of p. 160 destroys the sense. On p. 189, line 12, for "of" read "on." On p. 211, line 15, for "findeth" read "find it." Within four lines quoted from *Paradise Lost* on p. 226 there are two misprints, viz., "which" for "while" and "when" for "where." On p. 230, line 3 of first quotation, for "far-fetched" read probably "deep-fetched." There are two errors in line 17 of p. 251. On p. 254, before line 5 of the song, add "And he that will this health deny"—a line that has been entirely omitted. As it stands the stanza is meaningless. On p. 291, line 3 from bottom, we have "Grasmere," two lines below "Grassmere." On p. 299, line 7, read, I suppose, "poetry" for "poet." On p. 303, end of second quotation, by misplacing the last words the metre has been ruined. On p. 320, line 3 from bottom, for "which in" read "in which." These are the chief misprints (I have noted down not half); individually of small moment; collectively an exhibition of slovenly work. More serious, because more fundamental, is the illogical arrangement of much of the material, as when *Piers the Plowman* is discussed after the Scottish Chaucerians. Passages are quoted sometimes in the old spelling, sometimes modernized. Titles are given in italics or quotation-marks or neither. This leads to some absurd confusion, as on p. 150 where the title *Astrophel* is not in italics and the woman's name, Stella, is; or on p. 326 where part of a title is italicized and part is not.

From such fault-finding, important though it be if a review is to be more than impression-

istic inanity, it is pleasant to turn to some notes on a few of the many topics suggested by the reading of these books.

There is no space here for a discussion of the nature of lyric poetry. It may be said that in none of these books is a satisfactory conclusion arrived at. All three writers agree that the lyric originates in song, and they make some effort to trace this song-element down the ages and to find in its presence a criterion of lyric utterance. This accounts for Reed's statement that "the genius of Wordsworth was not lyrical." It is well to recall Coleridge's remark that he would rather have written "Nature's Lady" than twenty "Christabels" and "Kubla Khans." The insistence upon the singing quality accounts also for Rhys's low estimate of the sonnet as a lyric form. Here he is in direct opposition to Reed who thinks the sonnet is "the most important, as it is the most perfect, of all modern lyric forms" (p. 119), and to Schelling who takes "the flourishing of the sonnet as a criterion of the presence in our English literary history of the qualities that mark the soul of poetry" (p. 131). Rhys, on the contrary, thinks that "no sonnet can be as purely lyrical as a perfect song" (p. 163). There is much truth in this, for the sonnet has to struggle against exceptionally strait limitations of form, and the essential lyric spontaneity is more difficult of attainment. The question rests ultimately upon the relative worth in lyric poetry of the folk and literary elements. In this connection it may be remarked that both Reed (p. 169) and Rhys (p. 301) quote with something like astonishment remarks by Stevens and Landor respectively indicating their slight opinion of Shakespeare's sonnets. The passages quoted explain one another, and when I add that Rogers (*Table-Talk*, p. 149) said that "Blow, blow, thou winter wind" was "alone worth them all," and that Byron, who was saturated with the plays, never mentions the sonnets, it will be seen that this vagary of taste was quite general.

No one would attempt to praise Pope as a lyric poet in the higher sense of the term; yet I wish that one at least of these critics had mentioned the lines "Where'er you walk, cool

gales shall fan the glade," which, removed from their insipid context and exquisitely set to music by Handel, are full of a delicate artificial charm. And I think that something at least of the *literary* lyric can be found in the *Eloisa* and in the *Unfortunate Lady*. We are still too much a part of the Romantic Movement to appreciate fully the merits of such verse. The same prejudice appears in most judgments of Byron. Rhys and Schelling are certainly too low in their estimate of Byron's lyric gift. Reed is more fair. It is worth recalling that the late poet-laureate put "The Isles of Greece" with Spenser's *Epithalamium* as the supreme English lyrics (*The Bridling of Pegasus*, pp. 14 and 18).

Both Reed and Schelling praise Beddoes. There ought to be a revival of knowledge of this most interesting poet. He is much more than a "man of a single work" (Schelling, p. 191), for the fragments of *Torismond* and *The Second Brother* are full of beauty and his best lyric is not in *Death's Jest-book*. Reed perhaps exaggerates the gloom of Beddoes's temperament. The gloom of his poetry was an intentional literary effect. His delightful letters are almost always cheerful and enthusiastic. When a man speaks of "leading terror by the nose" it is difficult to associate him with a thorough-going pessimist like "B. V." The exquisite technique of Beddoes's lyrics is the subject of an interesting paper in F. Olivero's recent *Saggi di Letteratura Inglese* (p. 223 f.).

One detail about Shelley is worth mentioning. Reed writes (p. 412), "A critic has remarked that poets usually illustrate the spiritual by the material . . . but Shelley makes nature ghostly." A very striking instance of this, not so far as I am aware recorded, is afforded by a comparison of the opening lines of the *Ode to the West Wind* with the *Inferno* III, 112 f. Dante describes the spirits of the damned embarking upon Charon's boat,

Come d'autunno si levan le foglie
L'una appresso dell'altra.

The ghosts fall like autumn leaves; in Shel-

ley's imagination it is the autumn leaves that are "driven like ghosts" from the unseen presence of the wind.

Finally I note that towards Swinburne both Rhys and Schelling are more just than Reed, who overemphasizes the poet's lack of human sympathy. To this too-oft repeated assertion *The Pilgrims*, which is the very gospel of "social service," should be a complete reply.

In sum, the value of Rhys's book, despite occasional passages of sympathetic, if impressionistic, criticism, is slight; Schelling has made a good hand-book, a compendious satchel-guide to song; Reed's is a work of both suggestiveness and charm. In certain moods the student may well use his book; he will discard all such works when, approaching poetry in another mood, he hears through the magic casement the horns of elf-land blow.

SAMUEL C. CHEW, JR.

The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Conn.

Das schwache Präteritum und seine Vorgeschichte von HERMANN COLLITZ. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press), 1912. 8vo., xvi + 256 pp. (*Hesperia*. Schriften zur germanischen Philologie. Nr. 1.)

The current explanation of the so-called 'weak' preterit is based on theories advanced nearly a century ago by two well-known scholars, Franz Bopp and Jacob Grimm. In their opinion the dental of the weak preterit is a remnant of the preterit of the verb *to do*. A form *I said* is supposed not only to mean 'I did say,' but actually to contain in its *d* the preterit *I did*, so as to be the equivalent of *say + did* = Early Germanic **sag + dida*.

For half a century this view remained unchallenged. In 1868, however, Wilhelm Scherer attempted to substitute the theory of a close relationship of the weak preterit with the Greek passiv aorist in *-θην* and the Latin imperfect in *-bam*. These various tenses, in his opinion, are based on a composition of verbal roots with the

simple (or 'second') aorist of the root *dhē-* (i. e., the Germanic verb *do*). Scherer's explanation of the weak preterit was followed a few years later by another theory, much more revolutionary in character, in W. Begemann's monograph: *Das schwache Präteritum der Germanischen Sprachen* (Berlin, 1873). According to Begemann the weak preterit is not a compound tense, embodying two verbal roots, but a simple tense, ending in a dental consonant. He observed, moreover, that the dental suffix of the weak preterit is identical in form with that of the Indo-European *to-participle*, and accordingly he ventured to explain the weak preterit as an offshoot of this participle.

Whilst to his contemporaries Begemann's theory seemed altogether improbable, subsequent investigators (e. g., E. Windisch, H. Möller, and others) took a more favorable attitude toward his views, or at least toward some of his views. For, obviously, in trying to solve the problem of the weak preterit we have to distinguish between two different questions: (1) that of the nature of the dental of the weak preterit,—chiefly a question of historical phonetics (*Lautgeschichte*); (2) that of the origin of the weak preterit, or in other words, of its historical connection with the I.-Eur. tense-system. This is rather a morphological question, although phonetics enters into it in so far as the *Auslautgesetze* must be carefully considered.

As regards both these questions, the issue is not entirely between Grimm, Scherer, and Begemann, because certain new theories and modifications of the former theories were advanced at a more recent date. The problem in any case is rather complicated, and both for this reason and on account of the fact that the views of modern investigators differ as much as those of earlier scholars, there seemed to be an urgent need for a review of the whole question and for an attempt to reconcile the conflicting conceptions of this peculiar Germanic tense.

The subject has been divided into six chapters.

Chap. I serves as an introduction, reviewing